

NEW ENGLAND NOTE

THE FIRST REPORT OF *AGROSTIS EXARATA* VAR.  
*MONOLEPSIS* (POACEAE) IN NEW ENGLAND

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Spike bent, *Agrostis exarata* Trin., is a western grass. Hitchcock and Chase (1971) showed its native range as extending from Alberta, Nebraska, Texas and Mexico west to the Pacific states, including Alaska. *Agrostis exarata* var. *monolepsis* (Torr.) A. S. Hitchc. is distinguished from other infraspecific taxa by the presence of a prominent bent awn on the lemma. Hitchcock and Cronquist (1973) noted its range is much more restricted than that of the nominate variety, extending from southern British Columbia to southern California, and sporadically east to Nevada and Idaho. An adventive colony of *A. exarata* var. *monolepsis* was discovered in Vermont in 1982. The species is not mentioned in the standard references for the region, and is apparently the first New England record.

The spike bent population is restricted to clearings along the access road at the southwestern end of Wallingford Pond, elev. ca. 2200 feet, Green Mountain National Forest, town of Wallingford, Rutland County, Vermont. The specimen (Zika 6579 VT) was misidentified as *Agrostis canina* L. until recently. The two taxa may be distinguished in fruit by the following key:

- Glumes 2 mm long; panicle branches loose and spreading . . . . .  
..... *Agrostis canina*  
Glumes 2.5–4 mm long; panicle branches appressed-ascending  
..... *Agrostis exarata* var. *monolepsis*

How *Agrostis exarata* arrived on a remote jeep road in Wallingford is unknown, but presumably a motor vehicle was involved. In the Pacific Northwest, *A. exarata* is somewhat weedy and occasionally grows on the margins of dirt roads in damp places.

A 1968 collection (*Wood s.n.* VT) labeled *Agrostis exarata* from “experimental land,” Burlington, Chittenden Co., Vermont proved to be *A. gigantea* Roth.



## LITERATURE CITED

- HITCHCOCK, A. S. AND A. CHASE. 1971. Manual of the Grasses of the United States, 2nd ed., reprinted, Vol. 1. Dover Publ., New York.
- HITCHCOCK, C. L. AND A. CRONQUIST. 1973. Flora of the Pacific Northwest. U. Washington Press, Seattle, WA.

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